

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

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ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Exploring how and why social prescribing evaluations work – A Realist Review
AUTHORS	Elliott, Megan; Davies, Mark; Davies, Julie; Wallace, Carolyn

VERSION 1 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Ma, Ruimin King's College London, loppn
REVIEW RETURNED	15-Oct-2021

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>This is an excellent paper with great importance in the field of social interventions, and it is the first paper evaluating social prescribing as a novel and important intervention for a range of issues, e.g. loneliness.</p> <p>1. On page 4, the authors mentioned that social prescribing model was developed using a 'bottom-up approach'. I think the authors should give some brief background information on this approach for the readers.</p> <p>2. On page 4, the authors mentioned that 'these findings have not been corroborated with studies employing controlled designs'. However, a feasibility RCT has been implemented to examine the impact of community navigators on loneliness reduction among people with anxiety/depression. Lloyd-Evans et al (2020). The Community Navigator Study: Results from a feasibility randomised controlled trial of a programme to reduce loneliness for people with complex anxiety or depression. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0233535. I am surprised that this paper wasn't included in this review.</p> <p>3. Page 7, the authors should spell out the full name of CMOCs and ACCORD, as they first appeared in the main text.</p> <p>4. Page 8, 'A grey literature search was also undertaken in Wales'. The authors identified and included 26 grey literature in this review. Therefore, more studies could be identified if the grey literature search was also conducted in other countries, this may also explain why the majority of included studies were conducted in the UK (page 10). The authors should acknowledge this as one of the review's limitation.</p> <p>5. Page 8, documents were categorised as 'high', 'moderate' and low in usefulness and relevance. What criteria did the authors use? I can see in appendix C, these criteria were listed, the authors should refer Appendix C here.</p>
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REVIEWER	Pappas, Yannis The University of Bedfordshire
REVIEW RETURNED	02-Dec-2021

GENERAL COMMENTS	This is a much needed review in a rapidly-developing area with substantial practice and policy significance, and it adds to the body of knowledge in a dramatic way. This is especially true for the contribution to the overall contextualisation of context - measure outcomes. The methodology that was used was clearly documented and it is reproducible. The dissemination of the findings should be welcome by the research community as well as funders of relevant evaluations as it paves the ground for establishing standards of evaluation in social prescribing.
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer comment	Author response
<p>Reviewer 1</p> <p>This is an excellent paper with great importance in the field of social interventions, and it is the first paper evaluating social prescribing as a novel and important intervention for a range of issues, e.g. loneliness.</p>	<p>We would like to thank Reviewer 1 for their positive comments and suggestions for our manuscript.</p>
<p>On page 4, the authors mentioned that social prescribing model was developed using a 'bottom-up approach'. I think the authors should give some brief background information on this approach for the readers.</p>	<p>We have amended the sentence regarding the bottom-up approach to clarify what we mean by this.</p>
<p>On page 4, the authors mentioned that 'these findings have not been corroborated with studies employing controlled designs'. However, a feasibility RCT has been implemented to examine the impact of community navigators on loneliness reduction among people with anxiety/depression. Lloyd-Evans et al (2020). The Community Navigator Study: Results from a feasibility randomised controlled trial of a programme to reduce loneliness for people with complex anxiety or depression. I am surprised that this paper wasn't included in this review.</p>	<p>We would like to thank Reviewer 1 for bringing this paper to our attention. We reviewed all documents identified in the initial searches and found that the protocol for this study was identified (but excluded on the grounds of being a protocol), but the findings publication was not identified. The Lloyd-Evans et al (2020) paper was published on Friday 29th May 2020 and the study search cut-off date was Sunday 31st May 2020. We suspect that there may have been a delay in uploading the document to databases in time for the search, which may explain why it was not identified. Despite this, the study does meet the inclusion criteria for this Realist Review and provides useful contribution to the CMOs. We therefore have included the document in the Realist Review and updated the manuscript accordingly.</p>

	<p>All reference numbers throughout the manuscript and supplementary files have been updated accordingly. The PRISMA diagram has also been updated to reflect the addition of this paper.</p>
<p>Page 7, the authors should spell out the full name of CMOCs and ACCORD, as they first appeared in the main text.</p>	<p>Where these first appear in the main text, we have expanded them.</p>
<p>Page 8, 'A grey literature search was also undertaken in Wales'. The authors identified and included 26 grey literature in this review. Therefore, more studies could be identified if the grey literature search was also conducted in other countries, this may also explain why the majority of included studies were conducted in the UK (page 10). The authors should acknowledge this as one of the review's limitation.</p>	<p>A statement regarding the limitations of the grey literature search solely focusing on documents from Wales has been added to the 'Strengths, limitations and future research directions' section.</p>
<p>Page 8, documents were categorised as 'high', 'moderate' and low in usefulness and relevance. What criteria did the authors use? I can see in appendix C, these criteria were listed, the authors should refer Appendix C here.</p>	<p>A table with the description used for 'high', 'moderate' and 'low' has been added (Table 2). Appendix C details the inclusion criteria for determining whether studies were included in the final set, as opposed to a judgment regarding usefulness and relevance.</p>
<p>Reviewer 2</p> <p>This is a much needed review in a rapidly-developing area with substantial practice and policy significance, and it adds to the body of knowledge in a dramatic way. This is especially true for the contribution to the overall contextualisation of context - measure outcomes. The methodology that was used was clearly documented and it is reproducible. The dissemination of the findings should be welcome by the research community as well as funders of relevant evaluations as it paves the ground for establishing standards of evaluation in social prescribing.</p>	<p>We would like to thank Reviewer 2 for their positive feedback on our manuscript.</p>

VERSION 2 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Ma, Ruimin King's College London, loppn
REVIEW RETURNED	27-Feb-2022
GENERAL COMMENTS	Thank you the authors to update this manuscript accordingly. well done, great work!